

# NLG NEWSLETTER

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK: A TALE OF TWO BASHES

By Ed Reiter

The 2012 NLG Bash will be here before you know it.

The festivities will get under way at 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9, in Salon F on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Philadelphia Marriott Hotel, the main hotel for this year's World's Fair of Money.

Tickets will be available at the door, or can be purchased in advance starting Wednesday, Aug. 8, from Co-Treasurer Kay Lenker on the bourse floor or from me at bourse table 545.

The program will begin with a sumptuous buffet featuring an expertly prepared selection of entrées, side dishes and cheeses and desserts. Amy Powell, assistant marketing director to longtime NLG supporter Mike Fuljenz, is serving as Bash coordinator, as she did last year at the Chicago/Rosemont show. Mike is making it possible for Amy to be in charge of our event planning on-site for two solid days to ensure that everything goes smoothly. Those who attended the 2011 Bash gave rave reviews to the buffet, which Amy Powell planned in detail.

This year, our awards coordinator, Scott Travers, has scheduled some of our top awards, including the "Book of the Year" and the Clemy, to be presented

early in the program, beginning about 8:30 p.m., with the entertainment portion of the evening shortly after that. We will close with presentation of the balance of the awards to winners of the 2012 Writers' Competition.

As 2011 winner of the Clemy, Kay Lenker will get to bestow that award – the Guild's highest honor – on this year's choice. She made the selection from names submitted to her by the NLG Board of Directors. Kay received the award in Rosemont from Paul Whitnah, the 2010 honoree. It will be my pleasure to pass along the Ribbit Award, which I received last year from Scott Travers.



*A beaming Kay Lenker proudly displaying the plaque she received from Paul Whitnah as winner of the 2011 Clemy award. Whitnah seemed equally happy to make the presentation at the Rosemont Bash.*

Wendell Wolka will serve as Bash emcee again this year, and has promised his usual potpourri of sight gags, zingers and satirical asides – most at the expense of the ANA, the U.S. Mint and similar targets of opportunity.

Wendell doubled as a vocalist at the 2011 Bash, singing a parody I had prepared to honor our host town, the remote Chicago suburb of Rosemont, Ill. Wendell provided a stellar rendition of the 2011 offering, a left-handed tribute to Rosemont sung to the tune of "Chicago (That Toddling Town)."

Rosemont's remoteness also came in for some pointed but good-natured jabs when Scott Travers teamed up with two well-



traveled *Coin World* scribes, Steve Roach and Jeff Starck, to reveal the 10 Best Reasons for Holding the World's Fair of Money in that community.

In response to absolutely no requests from members, we revived a Bash routine called "If They Had Wed." To groans and guffaws, we regaled the audience with a list of peculiar names that would have resulted if certain well-known hobbyists had married given individuals.

If Judith Murphy or Judith Frank Kaller had married Howdy Doody, for example, she would have become Judy Doody. And if Mel Wachs had married actress Bea Arthur, he would have been Bea's Wachs. Things went downhill from there.

On a more serious note, David Alexander spoke briefly but eloquently about hobby legends Eric Newman and James Charlton. Both reached the remarkable age of 100 in 2011. And thankfully, both are still going strong a year later.

The top award in the 2011 Writers' Competition – Book of the Year – went to *The Secret History of the First U.S. Mint*, by Joel Orosz and Leonard Augsburger.

In accepting the Clemy, Kay Lenker – treasurer of the Guild since 1986 and one of our most tireless volunteers – delivered a memorable acceptance speech: "It's about time!" The only shorter speech in our 44-year history, as far as I am aware, was Cliff Mishler's in 1991: "Thanks."

As Kay suggested in her understated way, the honor she received was long overdue. She has done a masterful job of collecting dues and keeping our finances in order, and gone above and beyond the usual duties of her office by getting tickets printed for more than two dozen Bashes, selling those tickets beforehand, collecting them from Bashgoers at the door and, in general, lending a helping hand whenever needed – all without a cent of compensation.

Maurice Rosen has helped shoulder the burden in recent years as co-treasurer – and he, too, has been a mainstay of the Guild since before the millennium. In addition to working with Kay on financial matters, he also is a vital cog in sorting entries each year in the Writers' Competition, distributing them to judges and donating countless hours to serve as a judge himself.

Scott Travers has been coordinator of the contest for many years, and Tom DeLorey has done yeoman work tabulating the judges' decisions and drafting the list of winners.

Other essential members of our team include Wendell Wolka, who has served as Bash emcee for a quarter century; David L. Ganz, our savvy legal counsel; Michael Sedgwick, publisher of our *Newsletter*; and Walt Ostromecki, our secretary, who doubles as chief presenter

of writing awards at the Bash. Without the indispensable expertise of dedicated officers such as these, my job would be vastly more difficult.

The Guild has also benefited from the generosity of corporate sponsors, whose annual donations enable us to sustain the quality of the food, entertainment and awards that make the Bash such a unique and enjoyable event, as well as other NLG activities.

This year, as in the past, these sponsors – really, friends – include Heritage Auctions; the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America (NGC); Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles; the Certified Acceptance Corporation (CAC); and Michael R. Fuljenz.

The 2011 Bash was a smash hit. The 2012 version figures to be even bigger and better.

See you there!

## 2012 SYMPOSIUM FOCUSES ON JOBS

Finding jobs – a huge concern these days – will be the discussion topic at this year's NLG Symposium in Philadelphia. David T. Alexander, who recently made a major career change himself, will moderate the discussion, which will offer tips and insights on job opportunities for numismatic writers.

Speakers will include Jim Kingsland, a former editor for the Fox Business Network who writes a popular online blog on coins and precious metals, and Ed Reiter, senior editor of *COINage* and former Numismatics columnist for the Sunday *New York Times*. They will describe their experiences in seeking and finding income-producing work that enabled them to transform coins into paper money (or, more often, checks) simply by writing about them.

David Alexander is now a senior numismatist for Heritage at its New York City office after more than two decades as a cataloger for Stack's and its successor firms.

The 2012 Symposium will take place from 10 to 11 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 9, in Room 105 of the Pennsylvania Convention Center

Plan to attend!



# A STORY OF OLYMPIC GLORY

By Michael Sedgwick

On July 6, 2005 when the announcement of the choice of London as the venue for the 2012 Olympics was finally made, the genie came out of the bottle! For Britain's Royal Mint suddenly all systems were go.. go... GO! God help those cows and sheep hoping to get sleep in the pastures adjacent to the Mint's facility in Llantrisant, South Wales. It was time to get out the midnight oil.

The long term planning – based purely on the possibility that London would be chosen – was suddenly made fact, and like a runner leaving the blocks, productive energy was immediately switched to full power.

While many hours had been spent exchanging ideas around the water cooler, nothing could happen until that announcement. Now with a scurry of meetings and consultations with worldwide marketing partners, agents and distributors across Europe, Asia and the United States the concept of the United Kingdom's Olympic coin program began to take shape.

Sad but true, nowadays it is no longer a case of "Wouldn't that be nice?" or "Let's do that." With an investment of millions of pounds at stake, the more relevant questions are: "What will have collector appeal?" ... "How many can you sell?"... and "What time line do we need to plan for?"

While the London Olympic Games would not take place for seven years, the coin program was in fact, due to start within three. The Beijing Games would take place in 2008 – no announcements could be made before then, so whatever the Royal Mint had planned had to remain secret until the completion of the event. But a *Hand Over* coin was issued and created continuity between the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games.

Sadly my twenty-seven year association with the Royal Mint came to an end in the spring of 2008. While I had great thoughts of what opportunities the Olympic coins would afford an enthusiastic PR man, the new folks at the Mint decided that withdrawal from North America was their only course to salvation and obviously the decision was theirs to make. Strange to say, none of those decision makers remained at the Royal Mint for more than a few months after that, so a new team was in place with the responsibility for creating an Olympic coin Program.

An immediate realization was that, due to a law enacted by Congress in 1978, the United States Olympic Committee was given exclusive rights over the use of

Olympic-related marks, images and terminology in the United States. Only through a license granted by the USOC can another person or entity use these protected Olympic assets or sell Olympic product in the U.S. The Royal Mint itself could not sell London 2012 Olympic Games coins directly into the United States without a license from the USOC. For their part, the USOC were not about to allow a foreign Government Mint to have free rein, selling Olympic coins to unsuspecting Americans – better have an American company do that!

And so it came to pass in 2009 that the Royal Mint awarded an "exclusive" contract to the Minneapolis company GovMint (Asset Marketing), and my company was subsequently approached to handle PR for the United States. I clarify United States because the Royal Mint made a similar arrangement with the Royal Canadian Mint, because of their success with the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, so both Asset and we were confined to the USA.

Probably, as a "PR Man" this was one of the most difficult and unrewarding experiences I have ever entered in to. For me it had always been so easy to represent one of the premier Mints of the world, writing about coins of significance without any dealer influence at the time of their issue.

Suddenly I was trying to play catch up with coins that had already been announced in the UK, and hence around the world, working on a marketing schedule relative only to the United States. Getting a second bite of the cherry is hard enough to do when you represent a Mint, but when you are bringing second hand news on behalf of a dealer – even one that can reasonably claim to be the only game in town – it is not easy!

I was buoyed however by the intelligent array of coins that the Royal Mint finally created which, while wide ranging and substantial in number, succeeded – in my view – to offer something for everyone. The twenty-nine coin *Sports Collection* is not only affordable, but got the British public involved from the schoolchildren to the grandparents who offered designs in the national contest, open to all comers. The gold and silver *Celebration of Britain* coins appeal to collectors with deeper pockets. *Count Down* coins added a sense of occasion.

Now the coins are all issued and have been selling well in Britain, in Europe and in Asia. The USA and Canada are doing their bit, but somehow the absence of the Royal Mint has been very noticeable, especially in the marketing arena.

But in any event of course, the coins have to come before the event itself – so.... it is now July, athletes are arriving daily at the Olympic Village and the cry begins – "Let the Games begin!".



# ERROR COIN SPECIALIST ARNOLD MARGOLIS DIES

Arnold Margolis of Oceanside, N.Y., a pioneer dealer and communicator in the field of mint error coins, died March 26 at the age of 86.

Arnie, as friends called him, was a member of the NLG for many years, a regular attendee at the Guild's annual Bashes and winner of a number of awards in the yearly Writers' Competition.

Outside of numismatics, he worked for 35 years in technical capacities for NBC-TV, attaining the status of senior video control engineer. During that time, he was involved in coverage of many important events, notably as part of the NBC team that covered the funeral of President John F. Kennedy in 1963.

His interest in mint errors dated back more than half a century, and he is regarded as one of the people most responsible for broadening the base of collectors in that field. He was a member of the Board of CONE (Collectors of Numismatic Errors), the first major national error club, and was the first president of its offshoot, NECA (Numismatic Error Collectors of America). He also had been president of the Queens County Coin Club on Long Island, N.Y., and of NECOLI (Numismatic Error Collectors of Long Island).

Arnie authored a number of books and articles on his

specialty, including *The Error Collector's Handbook*, *The Numismatic Error Primer* and *Mint Errors on Carson City Dollars*. He and Fred Weinberg co-wrote the *Error Coin Encyclopedia*. The popular reference book was issued in four editions. He also was co-author, with Paul Marvin, of *The Design Cud*.

Arnie was longtime publisher of NECA's monthly *Errorscope* and from 1968 to 1991, without interruption, he published *Error Trends Coin Magazine*, the first commercial periodical devoted exclusively to error coins.

He wrote numerous articles about error coins and the minting process for *The Numismatist*, official monthly journal of the American Numismatic Association, and organized error coin seminars for the ANA. It was at his urging that the ANA, in 1977, established a new category for mint errors in exhibit judging at its annual conventions. He himself was an ANA exhibit judge for many years.

Arnie is survived by his wife, Joan; a son, Barry; a daughter, Amy, and four grandchildren.



*Arnie Margolis at one of the ANA Conventions he enjoyed attending.*



*Award presenter David T. Alexander, left, handing a plaque to Mike Fuljenz. It was one of several that Fuljenz received for entries in the 2011 NLG Writers' Competition.*

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# BETH DEISHER WRITES '30' TO 'COIN WORLD' CAREER

Beth Deisher, editor of *Coin World* for more than a quarter of a century, has embarked upon a well-deserved retirement. She stepped down April 30, handing the reins to Steve Roach.

"The time has come to open a new chapter in my life," she explained. "I have several projects in the works that will keep me engaged for a year or so and a long 'bucket list' to work on, as well as some personal travel on my immediate agenda."



Deisher joined the *Coin World* staff in 1981 as news editor and was serving as executive editor in 1985 when she was chosen for the editorship upon the retirement of Margo Russell — herself a veteran of more than two decades at the helm.

In short order, she gave hobby news a sharper focus and harder edge. During her stewardship, *Coin World* solidified its reputation as the journal of record in the numismatic field, and she emerged as an eloquent spokesman for the hobby not only through her insightful editorials but also through her expert testimony at congressional hearings on coin-related legislation.

Deisher is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she was awarded a bachelor's degree in English. She began her career in journalism in 1969 as a staff writer for the *Ledger-Star*, a daily newspaper in Norfolk, Va. In 1972, she joined the Virginia Education Association as a communications specialist.


She joined Amos Press Inc. of Sidney, Ohio, publisher of *Coin World*, in 1977 as news editor of the *Sidney Daily News*, the company's flagship publication. Four years later, she moved over to *Coin World*.

In 1995, Deisher received the Clemy, the NLG's

highest honor. It was among many major awards bestowed upon her over the years, including the 2010 Farran Zerbe Award and the 2006 Burnett Anderson Memorial Award for Excellence in Numismatic Writing.

Deisher is author of *Making the Grade — A Grading Guide to the Top 50 Most Widely Collected U.S. Coins*, has supervised updates of six editions of the *Coin World Almanac* and was founding editor of *Coin World's Guide to U.S. Coins, Prices & Value Trends*, which has been published annually since 1989.

She and her husband, Art, plan to continue living in Ohio.




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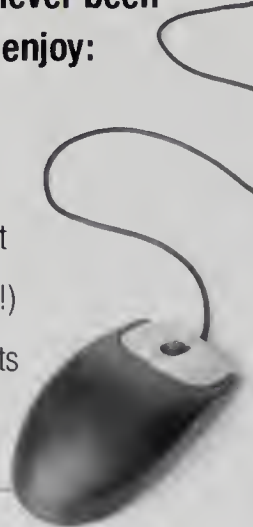
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# GOLDEN RULES TO PROTECT YOUR COINS FROM THIEVES

By Mike Fuljenz

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mike Fuljenz, author of many award-winning books, newsletters and articles, has drafted a list of common-sense tips to help collectors and investors safeguard their valuables from the growing number of thieves now targeting coins and precious metals. He compiled the list for clients of Universal Coin & Bullion, the company he heads in Beaumont, Texas. But, in the interest of spreading the word about the problem and proper precautions, he invites fellow NLG members to make use of the material – in whole or in part – with or without attribution in publications or websites for which they write.)

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Owning gold coins and bullion is a smart way to protect your wealth in the event of a global crisis or even inflation. Gold is the only real money to withstand the test of 5,000 years.

But owning physical gold comes with a big challenge: keeping it!

Gold draws bad guys like honey draws flies. Criminals love to steal gold. It's a large amount of value in a small, easy-to-conceal package. It's relatively harder to trace and easier to sell these days.

With rising gold prices this century, gold thefts are on the rise, with home invasions targeting gold becoming more dangerous, even deadly. In December 2011, two masked men broke into a home in Richmond, Texas, put a gun to a 12-year-old child's head and demanded to know where the valuables were. They made off with \$500,000 in precious metals and cash, along with the family SUV. In February 2012, an elderly couple and their son in Gonzales, La., had their throats slashed by thieves who took a safe containing a collection of gold coins valued at hundreds of thousands of dollars. All three victims died. The safe was found, empty.

Protecting your gold from covetous eyes and ears boils down to two simple rules: (1) *Put it in a safe place;* (2) *Keep your mouth shut about where it is.*

I always recommend that coin collectors and gold owners store precious valuables – gold, silver, platinum coins and bullion, along with precious gems – in a bank safe deposit box. In all the many years I've been in the coin business, I have never personally known of anyone losing coins stored in a safe deposit box.

Keep quiet about the safe deposit box. Don't be predictable about visits to the bank. Take a cue from experienced coin dealers who know to vary their routine and make visits to the bank at different times and by different routes each time.

Those who live in hurricane-prone areas should be especially careful not to leave valuables in their homes where looters can get at them in the chaotic aftermath of a storm. Remember the TV footage of rampaging looters after Hurricane Katrina? Or ask the victims of Hurricanes Rita and Ike whose homes were destroyed or left vulnerable to thieves. Some banks were closed for several weeks after these monster storms, but within 60 days people were able to get to their valuables in safe deposit boxes.

That said, I recognize that some gold owners mistrust institutions in general and banks in particular and elect to keep their gold close at hand in their homes, sometimes in a safe or even buried in the back yard. Be forewarned: Most buried tubes leak over time. There are risks involved with having large amounts of gold around the house if criminal elements know it's there. But for those who feel more in control with their valuables within easy reach, here are some common-sense ways to protect your valuables, yourself and your family.

**(1) Buy a safe** – a strong, heavy one, too heavy for thieves to carry easily. Make sure the safe is fireproof.

**(2) Secure the safe.** Bolt the safe to the floor if you can, hidden in an out-of-the-way location. Time is the thief's enemy. Make it time-consuming for them to get at your safe. Don't put it in your master bedroom or bathroom where the medicine cabinet is. Those are typically the first places thieves look.

**(3) Keep mum.** Be very guarded about who you tell



about your valuables and what they're worth.

**(4) Don't flaunt your valuables.** Despite the temptation to show off your hard-won luxuries, never leave your coin collection or jewelry lying about exposed to children, maids, workers or even friends. Many a rare coin has ended up in a vending machine thanks to a son's or daughter's ignorance of its value or been stolen by a tempted housekeeper or painter.

**(5) Check your insurance.** Read your homeowners insurance policy carefully to make sure it covers collectible valuables. Not all policies do. Make an inventory list (with estimated values) and photograph your most valuable coins for insurance purposes. Keep the list and photos in a secure place that only you and your closest confidant know about and have access to, preferably off-site at a secure location.

**(6) Know your neighbors.** Watch out for each other and report any suspicious activity in the neighborhood.

**(7) Make it look like you're always home.** Never let it appear that you are away from home for an extended period. If you're taking a long trip, cut off your mail and newspaper delivery temporarily. Hire someone or enlist the aid of a willing neighbor to clear snow from your sidewalks, mow your lawn, move your parked vehicles periodically and remove advertising fliers hung on your front doorknob or gate. Leave a TV, stereo or radio on when you're gone and turn up the volume loud enough to be heard from outside. Install inexpensive timing systems on several lamps near windows visible to the street, so that lights come on and turn off unpredictably as though someone were home.

**(8) Don't publicly announce your vacation.** Never announce on Facebook, Twitter or any other public forum that you're going to be away from home, not even for a wedding or funeral. And never mention your valuables in social media. Social media are happy hunting grounds for thieves.

**(9) Destroy the evidence of your expensive new toys.** Dismantle, rip up and conceal in an opaque garbage bag the box for that new super-big-screen high-definition cable-ready Blu-Ray TV set you bought. Putting the empty boxes that expensive goodies came in out on the curb amounts to extending an engraved invitation to burglars. While they're inside lifting your TV or stereo

set, they'll be on the lookout for other valuables and could stumble upon your coin collection.

**(10) Keep your house locked.** Keep doors and windows locked – always. In a surprising number of daylight burglaries, the thief simply walks in through an unlocked garage or back door or climbs through an unlocked window. Be aware that thieves sometimes push in window-mounted air-conditioning units to crawl in. Even if you live in a “safe” neighborhood where nothing bad ever happens, thieves are mobile and can get to you. Leaving doors and windows unlocked, including those in the back of the house, is risky business. Home invaders have become far bolder and more dangerous. They think nothing of barging into an unlocked house in the middle of the day, even with the occupants at home. Put dead-bolts on doors; some conventional locks can be opened simply by sliding a credit card through the gap between the door and the jamb.

**(11) Install a very loud monitored home security alarm.** The loud noise not only startles the intruders but makes them very anxious to get away before police arrive. Post the sign provided by the alarm company in a prominent, highly visible place. Secure and lock your outside breaker box or electrical panel to reduce the ease with which thieves can disarm your burglar alarm system and cordless phone. Real pros know how to defeat burglar alarms, but most random target-of-opportunity thugs tend to think twice about tangling with a burglar alarm. Place the alarm control in a place where it is not obvious or easy to see.

**(12) Turn on the lights!** Well-lit grounds leave few hiding places for thieves to slip in undetected and reduce random robberies. Motion-activated lights catch them by surprise.

**(13) Get a big dog.** A dog with a deep voice that sounds ferocious (even if he really isn't) helps keep the bad boys at bay. Even the toughest criminals generally fear dog bites. Even a cute yapping “squeaky-toy” dog may serve as an alert that strangers are present.

This information was compiled in consultation with and review by numerous law enforcement agencies in the Beaumont, Texas, region, whose valuable input, insights and assistance I appreciate. The wisdom of their experience as I have summarized it here may just help save your valuables – even your life.



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# FROM RIBBET TO RIBBIT: A REVIEW

By Pete Smith

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Longtime Guild member Pete Smith singlehandedly resuscitated an all-but-dead NLG award half a decade ago when he purchased a replacement for the largely unmourned Chinese Money Frog that had symbolized the annual Ribbet Award. In this article, Pete traces the history of the award and recounts his successful efforts to revive it.)

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It is known by several names including the Chinese Money Frog, Wealth Toad or the three-legged toad. In the Chinese language it is called Ch'an Chu. The Money Frog is associated with Feng Shui, the ancient art used to create balance and harmony in the home.

The frog holds a Chinese coin in its mouth and sits atop a pile of gold coins or ingots. Some representations have a pattern of seven dots on the back in the shape of the "little dipper" or the seven Great North Pole stars. It is believed the frog will appear during the full moon near homes where wealth will soon be received.

There is an ancient Chinese myth about the Archer who married the sister of the Water Spirit. He became a hero by shooting down nine of 10 suns that circled the Earth and burned the crops. He was rewarded with the pill of immortality from the Goddess of the West. His greedy wife coveted the pill and stole it while he was absent. She swallowed the pill and immediately discovered that she could fly. Upon his return her husband inquired about the pill. The fearful wife opened the window and flew out toward the Moon. The Archer followed but was turned back by a strong wind.

The other deities punished the wife by turning her into a three-legged frog and sending her to live on the Moon. The husband was rewarded with the Palace

of the Sun. He built a palace on the Moon for his wife, but he could visit her only on the 15th day of each moon. All this is wrapped together with yin and yang, sun and moon, male and female.

There are many versions of this myth. It is also the foundation for the Chinese mooncake festival celebrated on the 15th day of the eighth lunar moon.

Thus the three-legged frog is a symbol of the Moon and also of Greed. It strives to protect the wealth it has and to acquire more. It has become a good luck charm and a symbol of good fortune.

Chinese shop owners will place the Money Frog near the cash register. It may be placed near the safe or any place associated with money. Gamblers may place the frog at the altar of the Wealth God.



A Chinese Money Frog may be placed in the home in the southeast corner of the living room diagonally across from the door. The frog is placed facing the door to welcome in wealth. However, at night it should be turned inward or it may escape and never return. Money frogs should be treated like frogs rather than deities. They may be placed low or on the floor. If they are placed too high, they may be afraid to jump down and go look for money.

Multiples of three, six or nine frogs may be arranged about the home or garden with nine being the best number. Money frogs go out to collect money in the afternoon and return at night with money sticking to their feet. Money frogs should never be placed in a bedroom, kitchen or toilet.

Many vendors on the Web offer money frogs made of jade, glass, resin, ceramics and metal. A check of eBay found more than 200 listings, with few the same. Many listings include some version of the story told here.



## The Ribbet Award – 1996-2000

The original Ribbet Award was contributed by J. P. Martin. In the Winter 1997 issue of the *NLG Newsletter*, it was described as “the form of a Chinese antiqued alabaster carving in life size of two frogs emerging from a marsh, the larger lifelike creature holding a square-holed cash coin or amulet in its mouth. With its bronze patina, this sculpture is an object of art of considerable beauty.” Others had contrary views about its beauty.

It was awarded each year “to a hobby leader who has achieved prominence in the numismatic world without losing approachability, sense of humor and essential modesty.” In making the initial presentation in 1996, David T. Alexander said, “This award will honor those who have swum through the Jurassic swamp that so many Boards resemble, coming out at the other side with their good cheer and humanity still in place and their coins and common sense still firmly in their clasp.”

### Winners of the Ribbet Award

1996 – Anthony Swiatek  
1997 – Wendell L. Wolka  
1998 – Claude Murphy  
1999 – Neil Shafer  
2000 – Arlie Slabaugh

Slabaugh was in poor health and did not return to present the Ribbet Award at the next ANA convention. Attempts to get the award returned were unsuccessful before Slabaugh died Sept. 26, 2007.

An insensitive member of the NLG commented that the holder of the Ribbet Award had croaked. Perhaps the attempt at humor fit the spirit of the award.

### The Ribbit Award – 2008 to Date

During the 2007 ANA convention in Chicago, there was discussion about resurrecting the Ribbet Award. Simcha Kuritsky mentioned that a frog with a coin in its mouth is a common Chinese good luck symbol, and that one might be found at a shop that sells such items. I volunteered to attempt to replace the missing award.

I started at the closest regional shopping mall and a shop that sells Chinese products. They did not have a

money frog for sale. However, they did have one sitting by the cash register. The clerk did not know much about it except that it was there for good fortune.

Minneapolis does not have a “Chinatown,” but St. Paul has a short stretch of University Avenue with shops that serve the Chinese community. I found a shop with a couple of ceramic money frogs. One was about the size of a grapefruit and the other much larger. They were not what I was looking for.

The Mall of America has another shop selling Chinese products and money frogs in a couple of sizes. I picked out one that I thought would be appropriate for the NLG award. Then I took it to a shop that sells awards to have it put on a marble base.

I realized that I wasn’t sure how to spell “Ribbet,” so I looked through back issues of the *NLG Newsletter*. There I found an article by Neil Shafer (*NLG Newsletter*, Spring 2000) that spelled it “Ribbit” in several places. That was good enough for me, so I had a brass name plate added to the Ribbit Award.

After I shipped the award to Ed Reiter, he mentioned that he always spelled the previous award as “Ribbet.” He also mentioned that there was uncertainty about whether the principal NLG award should be called the “Clemmy” or the “Clemmy.”

I have no problem with the spelling. It is clear to me that the Ribbet Award was given out during 1996-2000 and the Ribbit Award is a new award instituted in 2008.

The 2008 recipient, chosen by the NLG Board, was Maurice Rosen. Reiter mentioned that he thought it was appropriate that the first of the second-generation frog awards should go to “Rosen the Ribbiter.”

Like the Clemmy (or Clemmy, if you prefer), the winners of the Ribbet and Ribbit generally have been chosen by the previous year’s recipient. In 2009, Rosen passed the award to Kay Lenker. She, in turn, bestowed it upon Scott Travers in 2010 and he handed it off to Ed Reiter last year in Rosemont, Ill.

Like the original Clemmy typewriter, the Ribbit frog is physically entrusted to the winner each year, and he or she then is responsible for bringing it to the Bash and presenting it to the recipient one year later.



# PUTTING THE 'ILL' IN ILLINOIS

By Ed Reiter

As some of you might have noticed (to your great relief and delight), I have retired from active participation in NLG Bashes after more than a quarter-century of warbling ... I mean, wobbling ... musical parodies. This became necessary after my vocal range dwindled to roughly half an octave.

For several years, however, I have continued to produce lyrics for new parodies, then inveigled unsuspecting dupes into serving as stand-ins and jeopardizing their reputations by performing the hapless numbers in my place.

As the 2011 Bash approached, I even got help in choosing a subject for my parody. Bob Leonard, general chairman of the 2011 ANA World's Fair of Money (that's the ANA convention, for old fogies like me), suggested that I draft Bash-appropriate lyrics for the old standard tune "Chicago." I hesitated at first, since the convention wasn't being held in Chicago but in the remote suburb of Rosemont. Then I got to thinking: This might be the only link to Chicago that showgoers would have all week.

In a second stroke of luck, I recruited Bash-master Wendell Wolka to sing my immortal ... I mean, immoral ... words – and he turned out to have not only a pleasant singing voice but also a command of the melody.

Here, for your scrapbooks ... I mean trash cans ... are the words that go with the music:

*In Rosemont – far Rosemont,  
We're meeting this year.  
Because we've been told that  
Chicago is near.*

*Two hours.*

*Bet your Seated dollar  
You'll use your shoes  
Out in Rosemont,  
Far Rosemont,  
The town where Sunday coin shows are now shut down.*

*Each runway leads one way –*

*To high-flying fun  
Amid all the glitter and lamé.  
Say,*

*Four days to nap  
With nothing to do.  
Look on the map  
Beyond Timbuktu.*

*For Rosemont,  
Chicago's derrière.*



*The food and the chef awaiting the arrival of attendees at the 2011 Bash in Rosemont. Bashgoers gave the hot buffet an A+ for diversity and deliciousness.*



*With lights dimming, an expectant audience of well over 100 awaiting the start of the show at the 2011 Bash in Rosemont.*



## 2 NEW DIRECTORS TO JOIN NLG BOARD

Two new members will join the NLG Board of Directors at the World's Fair of Money in Philadelphia on Aug. 9.

The newly elected directors are Dorothy Harris and Maurice H. Rosen. They were nominated by the current Board in May and elected without a contest when no additional candidates were placed in nomination by the membership prior to the June 22 deadline. If there had been a contest, an election would have been held by mail.

Dorothy Harris is former director of antiques and collectibles for Random House, and has served the Guild for many years as a judge in the annual Writers' Competition. Maurice Rosen is publisher of the award-winning *Rosen Numismatic Advisory*, has been co-treasurer of the Guild for several years and received the Clemy Award in 2009 for his dedication to the hobby and the Guild.

Harris and Rosen each will serve for two years and then be eligible to seek a second term. After serving two terms, directors must step down for at least one election cycle.

Members of the Board oversee NLG policy, review membership applications and submit nominations for the annual Clemy Award.

The two newly elected directors will succeed John Albanese and R.W. "Bob" Julian, both of whom are completing their second two-year terms and thus are required under NLG bylaws to step down for at least a year. Albanese co-founded the Professional Coin

Grading Service (PCGS) and founded the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America (NGC), and Julian is one of the hobby's most renowned scholars, researchers and writers.

The two new directors will join three holdovers: David T. Alexander, Donn Pearlman and Will Rossman.

Alexander is a well-known cataloger who recently joined Heritage Auctions as a senior numismatist. He also is a prolific writer and highly respected scholar and winner of numerous ANA writing awards. He served the Guild as executive director through most of the 1980s, participates regularly in the NLG Bash and Symposium and received the Clemy in 1987.

Donn Pearlman is president of his own Las Vegas public relations firm. He launched this business following a distinguished career as a broadcast journalist in Chicago. He also has written several books and hundreds of articles. He served as master of ceremonies for the NLG Bash for many years and received the Clemy in 1984. He is a former member of the ANA Board of Governors.

Will Rossman has been involved with rare coins for nearly half a century and has held key positions with a number of leading dealerships and hobby organizations. As senior numismatist at Heritage Rare Coin Galleries, he helped create much of the company's promotional literature and edited the award-winning *Rare Coin Estate Handbook*. He, too, is a former member of the ANA Board of Governors.

The current terms of Alexander, Pearlman and Rossman will expire next year, and all must step down at that time.



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